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# Maldives to open five new airports in 2019

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(<https://maldives.net.mv/31166/maldives-to-open-five-new-airports-in-2019/>)

Five new airports will come into operation by the end of the year, Maldives government announced Sunday.

Transport minister Aishath Nahula told local media that construction of airports on the islands of Kulhudhuffushi in Haa Dhaal atoll, Funadhoo in Shaviyani atoll, Maafaru in Noonu atoll, Madivaru in Lhaviyani atoll and Maavarulu in Gaaf Dhaal atoll is nearing completion. Kulhudhuffushi airport will come into operation first, followed by Funadhoo and Maafaru airport in August, she said.

The airport being developed in Kulhudhuffushi (<http://maldives.net.mv/27368/new-airport-in-maldives-north-welcomes-maiden-flight/>), a key population zone in the north, and in Maafaru (<http://maldives.net.mv/26963/intl-airport-in-maldives-proposed-ultra-luxury-tourism-zone-welcomes-maiden-flight/>), a proposed ultra-luxury tourism zone, had earlier welcomed test flights. However, delays in the construction of terminal and other support facilities had pushed back commercial operations.

Six hectares off the southern coast of Kulhudhuffushi and another nine hectares from the island's wetlands were reclaimed (<http://maldives.net.mv/22800/land-reclamation-for-kulhudhuffushi-airport-kicks-off-operations-to-begin-mid-2018/>) for the airport, which has a runway measuring 1,200 metres in length and 60 metres in width.

Known as the "Heart of the North", Kulhudhuffushi is the economic capital of the northern Maldives and has a population of over 9,000, making it one of the biggest and most populous islands in the northern part of the country. The island is famous for its mangroves, after which the island itself is named.

Up until recently, Haa Dhaal remained as the only atoll in the Maldives which did not have a tourist resort. That changed in March when Hondaafushi Island Resort became the first resort (<http://maldives.net.mv/24812/hondaafushi-opens-as-first-resort-in-maldives-haa-dhaal-atoll/>) to open in the atoll.

The new airport is expected to facilitate the development of tourist resorts as well as guesthouses in the region.

Meanwhile, construction of the international airport in Maafaru had resumed after major delays due to a corruption scandal. Support facilities such as parking and staff accommodation are being built at the United Arab Emirates (UAE) funded airport.

The international airport is part of a joint Maldives-UAE project (<http://maldives.net.mv/23846/maldives-signs-up-with-abu-dhabi-funded-to-develop-ultra-luxury-tourism-zone-in-north/>) to develop Noonu atoll as an ultra-luxury tourism zone.

Abu Dhabi Fund for Development (ADFD) had earlier extended (<http://maldives.net.mv/23805/abu-dhabi-funded-new-intl-airport-in-maldives-north-to-open-july-2018/>) a grant of USD 60 million for the project, which involves developing a 2.2-kilometre runway along with state-of-the-art facilities to cater international flight operations and private jets. A city hotel will also be built along with the airport.

Noonu atoll is located about 180 kilometres north of capital Male, on the southern edge of the Maldives' northernmost geographical atoll.

Existing high-end resorts in Noonu atoll include the Velaa Private Island, The Sun Siyam Iru Fushi Maldives, Cheval Blanc Randheli and the recently opened Soneva Jani. Several new resorts, including those by international hotel chains, are being developed in the atoll.

Meanwhile, Madivaru airport is nearing completion (<http://maldives.net.mv/27373/chinese-firm-to-build-airport-in-maldives-lhaviyani-tourist-hotspot/>) too.

Kuredu Holdings, which owns and operates several resorts in Lhaviyani atoll, is investing (<http://maldives.net.mv/25914/maldives-to-develop-airport-in-lhaviyani-tourist-hotspot/>) USD 13 million to develop the airport. The project involves reclaiming some three hectares of land from the lagoon of Madivaru, building a 1.2-kilometre runway, and a training academy for aviation officials from flagship carrier Maldivian and seaplane operator Trans Maldivian Airways (TMA).

The company can develop a city hotel to incentivise the airport operation.

Lhaviyani atoll has one of the highest concentrations of tourism activity in the Maldives, with eight resorts including Kuredu Resort Maldives, Komandoo Island Resort and Spa, Hurawalhi Maldives, Palm Beach Island Maldives Resort and Spa, Atmosphere Kanifushi, Kanuhura Maldives, Fushifaru Maldives and Cocoon Maldives already in operation. Several new islands in the atoll are being developed as resorts, including the recently launched Kudadoo Maldives Private Island by Hurawalhi and Innahura Maldives Resort.

Over a million tourists from across the globe visit the Indian Ocean island nation every year to holiday in one of the 120 resorts and 400 plus guesthouses located in all corners of the country. The multi-billion dollar tourism industry, which is the country's main economic activity, relies heavily on the domestic transport infrastructure, especially air travel.

Maldives, the most dispersed country on the planet with 1,192 islands spread over roughly 90,000 square kilometres, already has 11 airports, including three international airports. The government has contracted both local and international companies to develop (<http://maldives.net.mv/tag/new-airports/>) additional domestic airports across the archipelago in a bid to boost tourism.

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**Peter Allen**

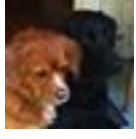
...but weren't The Maldives supposed to have disappeared under the unprecedented rise in sea-levels by now? Or is that just over hyped nonsense?

Like · Reply · 26 · 1d

**John Leal**

Just over hyped nonsense.

Like · Reply · 6 · 1d

**Jim Patten**

Well...a team has been their for over 30 years filming the so-called ocean rise over time. Instead...the water level has been dropping significantly, creating enormous amounts of new land and beach!

Like · Reply · 1 · 10h

**Zeek Zaffino**

No it's very wet don't come you might drown in your sleep 😊

Like · Reply · 3h

**Rudolf Dornmayr**

is that what is known as a wet dream?

Like · Reply · 2h

**Tony Poole**

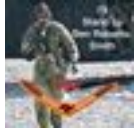
They must have put them in to evacuate everyone in 10 years when they go underwater. Or was that 10 years ago that they were supposed to disappear? Our foreign aid at work no doubt.

Like · Reply · 1 · 11h

**Alan Sargeant**

These airports are made for the super rich tourists. The Maldives has a highly developed sea plane transport industry which is quite expensive.

Like · Reply · 2h

**Peter Williams**

Is this so you can evacuate all your citizens when the sea waters rise and cover your islands??

Or is it because the 'climate change sea level rising' narrative is false, and your tourism numbers are growing??

If that's the case.... will you stop asking for more \*billions\* of \$\$'s from the UN for "climate change" reparations?

Like · Reply · 10 · 1d

**Gregory Fendt**

ahhhh.....the airports are not for sea planes....

Like · Reply · 23h

**Murray Dickson**

Using your own money or are you expecting more hand-outs, er sorry...Foreign Aid from the Infidels ?

Like · Reply · 5 · 1d

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